

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**May 23, 2007**

Chair Knox White called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:35 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Roll was called and the following recorded.

Members Present:

John Knox White  
Michael Krueger  
Robert McFarland  
Robb Ratto  
Eric Schatmeier  
Srikant Subramaniam

Absent:

Jeff Knoth

Staff Present:

Obaid Khan, Supervising Civil Engineer  
Barry Bergman, Transportation Coordinator

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. April 25, 2007

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that his intent was to ask if the garage could be used as a park and ride lot.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that on page 12, his intent was for staff to contact the appellant to make better use of existing *off-street* parking.

- b. March 28, 2007

*Staff Khan* noted that staff would review the tapes, and if there was a difference between the tapes and the stated intent of the Commissioners, they would bring the minutes back to the Commission.

*Commissioner Ratto* advised that the unanimous vote was indicated to be 4-0, and that it should be 5-0.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* moved approval of the minutes for the March and April meeting minutes. *Commissioner Krueger* seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0 with *Commissioner McFarland* abstaining.

3. **AGENDA CHANGES**

There were none.

#### **4. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS**

- a. Multimodal Circulation Plan
- b. Pedestrian Plan
- c. TSM/TDM Plan

*Chair Knox White* requested that CalTrans report on the I-880 projects.

#### **5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

There were none.

#### **6. OLD BUSINESS**

There were none.

#### **7. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **7A. Review and Provide Comment on Harbor Bay Village VI Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) *Outcome: Review DEIR and provide comments to be forwarded to Planning Board.***

*Staff Bergman* presented the staff report and summarized the scope and layout of this project. Staff developed a list of concerns regarding the project:

1. Page 3.12-17: The DEIR notes that the City's adopted Bicycle Master Plan includes a proposed trail connection from Catalina Avenue to North Loop Road at the end of Island Drive. This connection is not being recommended for inclusion in the project.
2. Impacts on transit service are addressed by the EIR only in terms of whether the existing transit service could accommodate the anticipated riders from the project. They did not consider what kind of demand could be generated from whether the transit service should be modified to directly serve the project, with over 100 units there. The nearest existing bus stops to the transit service would be approximately 2000 feet from the development.
3. Page 2-8: The DEIR incorrectly refers to the lines that are serving the area.
4. Page 3.12-18: Discusses impacts on traffic capacity, and the DEIR states that there would not be significant traffic capacity impacts based on the data presented in the DEIR.
5. The report was not accurate with regard to the intersection of Harbor Bay Parkway and South Loop Road. The intersection is currently at Level of Service F during the AM and PM peaks. The City's threshold of significance at intersections operating at LOS E or F in the baseline scenario is an increase in delay of four or more seconds.
6. The DEIR indicates that to mitigate the impacts, the proposed project would contribute toward the Harbor Bay Business Park Traffic Impact Fund, which in turn would fund the signals when they are determined to be needed. However, the TIF

- monies would not cover the developer's *pro rata* share for any new signals. This would be funded separately and independently as project impact mitigations.
7. Table 3.12-6: There is a projected increase in delay from 280.9 seconds to 328.2 seconds during the AM peak, although there is no increase expected during the PM peak. According to 3.1207, delay during the AM peak is projected to increase from 648.3 seconds to 747.6 seconds. Delay during the PM peak is projected to increase from 431.5 seconds to 912.1 seconds, which exceeds the City's threshold of significance.
  8. Page 3.12-16 (TR-2): The DEIR indicates that if the intersections of Harbor Bay Parkway at North Loop Road and South Loop Road, and at Harbor Bay Parkway at South Loop Road and B Street, it is expected that traffic signals would eventually be required should further development occur. The DEIR states that the project would pay towards these signals as part of the TIF, but it should be more specific that this will be a *pro rata* share based on the project impacts. The TIF monies would not cover the developer's *pro rata* share for any new signals, and they would need to be funded independently as project impact mitigations.
  9. Mitigation Measure TR-2.1: This discusses only the signal at the intersection of Harbor Bay Parkway and North Loop and South Loop.
  10. Table S-1: Summarizes the mitigation measures also does not mention the signal at Harbor Bay Parkway and South Loop and B.
  11. The developer must pay the Citywide Developer Fee to mitigate for cumulative impacts associated with the project.

Staff recommends that the Transportation Commission review the DEIR for the Harbor Bay Village VI, and provide comments, which will be forwarded to the Planning Board. *Staff Bergman* projected the project map on the overhead screen.

*Chair Knox White* invited comment from the AC Transit representatives. They had no comment.

*Chair Knox White* recommended that because this change would require a General Plan Amendment, from commercial-business to residential, and that as such it represented a significant change in policy, which is the purview of the Transportation Commission to make recommendations on. Before the DEIR moves forward, he requested that policy change for the General Plan be brought to the Transportation Commission for comments on the transportation issues.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that would presuppose a change to the General Plan.

*Commissioner Ratto* requested that because Item 7A would entail a lengthy discussion, that the Transportation Commission hear Item 7B first, and then return to Item 7A.

*Chair Knox White* agreed with *Commissioner Ratto's* suggestion, and postponed the discussion until Item 7A has been heard.

**7B. AC Transit Line 51 Task Force. Outcome: Review Line 51 data and provide comments to staff.**

*Staff Bergman* presented the staff report, and noted that bus bunching along the 51 Line is being addressed by the task force assembled by AC Transit. He described the route of Line 51 and noted that it had the highest patronage in the AC Transit system, with approximately 22,000 boardings daily. Headways were generally eight to 10 minutes, and running time changes would be implemented in June, which would add nine minutes of running time during the afternoon peak period in the southbound direction, and eight minutes in the northbound direction. The operating speed would be approximately nine miles per hour, which is 25% slower than the district system average. The additional running time would require an additional two vehicles to meet the scheduled service frequency. He described the makeup of the task force, and noted that several variables were examined, including running time, boardings, service deployment policies, AC Transit service policies, using the TRB *Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual*. The staff report indicated what tasks had been completed to date, as well as the future items to be examined. The statistical baseline would be developed; service delivery options would be identified; and service design options would be examined. He detailed the attachments distributed to the Commission.

*Tony Bruzzone*, AC Transit, noted that their Board requested that they look into this problem, and added that it was not a new problem. He noted that they were engaged in new data collection. They intended to have AC Transit staff ride the buses with a laptop, inputting every delay that occurs to identify the specific causes. He noted that was an intensive effort that would take about two months, and that they will collect the data after Labor Day. This will allow the new schedule to be implemented, and avoid data collection during the summer when ridership is lower.

*Chair Knox White* noted that the Task Force was a staff body, not a public body. He noticed that the plan did not identify a deliverable, which was the identification of existing problems.

*Mr. Bruzzone* confirmed that was part of the statistical baseline, and noted that the formal work plan included deliverables that were not included in the summary.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that since 1998, there had been a brief improvement before it slid back. He believed there should be some permanent monitoring, and inquired about AC Transit's commitment to ongoing monitoring.

*Mr. Bruzzone* replied that the section on service delivery addressed that issue, and noted that the Board was very interested in getting good data on a consistent basis. He added that there was an ongoing discussion about what the benchmarks should be.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that the discussion about running time under "Measurable Objectives" read, "While in motion, the average speed of the bus is 9.9 miles an hour." He inquired whether it discounted dwell time. He inquired what the average speed was, including

stops. *Mr. Bruzzone* noted that the average speed does not include dwell time, but does include stops for traffic signals and other stops not associated with loading and unloading passengers.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that Exhibit 1 discussed magnetic stripe payment systems, and inquired about the comparison between Translink reader systems and the magnetic stripes. *Mr. Bruzzone* noted that when they work, the Translink reader systems were faster, and added that magnetic stripes were extremely slow. He noted that on Spare the Air Day, when fares were not collected, an MCI bus took 3.2 seconds per passenger to board; paying passengers increased the time to 8 seconds per passenger.

*Chair Knox White* inquired about the percent of on-time performance (OTP) under “Line 51 Best Practices.” He was surprised at how well the 51 seemed to be doing at 67.8%, and noted that as a regular rider of the line, he did not perceive that to be the case. *Mr. Bruzzone* noted that on-time performance consisted of being within five minutes of the scheduled time. *Chair Knox White* inquired whether OTP included stops at the early part of the route.

*Puja Sarna* of AC Transit replied that it was for the full day. He inquired whether OTP was measured at some key spots such as 12<sup>th</sup> and Broadway during certain times of the day. He did not perceive that OTP figure as being representative of the performance at the key spots. He noted that he frequently hears complaining about the route in downtown Oakland. *Ms. Sarna* noted the OTP averaged the data from the entire day. She noted that they could make a range of OTP at the same points, and noted that during the next data collection effort, they would have traffic checkers at certain points along the route, checking to see how far apart the headways would be, as well as what the lead times would be. They could match the OTP to those same points during different times of the day. She noted that the data was skewed with the 6 – 8 a.m. data, and 10 p.m. to midnight data, which would be much more on-time than peak times.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that when he used the 51, he would ride into Oakland in mid-morning, and return to Alameda about 7:30-8:00 p.m. and found the service to be reliable at that time. He acknowledged that the traffic congestion at that time was not as bad, and crush loads were not being carried.

*Mr. Bruzzone* noted that the measure of on-time performance was minus 1/plus 5, and that a bus on a 10-minute headway drops back five minutes, that would create a big gap. If the follower bus was up one minute, there would be only four minutes between buses, leading to bunching. They would also examine headway adherence, as well as running times.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired whether the fact that the line was being observed would have an impact on the on-time performance. *Mr. Bruzzone* noted that was a good point, but they did not observe that. He noted that performance does change with manual traffic checkers, but not with an APC unit. He noted that some traffic checkers board with tickets so they would not be apparent to the driver as a traffic checker.

## Public Comment

*Kathi Young* noted that she has ridden transit in locations such as Seattle, Florida, New Orleans and Hawaii, and with the exception of Orange County, she had not seen a route as bad as the 51. She noted that she had recently seen four 51 buses sitting at the Berkeley Amtrak station, which all left together. She would like to know what AC Transit planned to do to change the situation.

## Closed Public Comment

*Chair Knox White* believed the plan would be effective in identifying the problems and creating a plan to mitigate them. He complimented those involved in creating the plan. He believed the data should clearly illustrate the extent of the problem. He inquired whether the satcomm data could be used to calculate on-time performance in a meaningful way. He suggested that UC Berkeley be contacted to see whether students could perform that work.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that the data did not tell the Commission why the problems exist.

*Mr. Bruzzone* acknowledged that both were needed, and that understanding the problem and having a way to collect the data in the present and in the future were both very important components. He noted that after problems are resolved or eased, they often backslide because of a lack of monitoring in the future.

In response to an inquiry by *Staff Khan* whether AC Transit was examining a correlation with congestion, *Mr. Bruzzone* confirmed that was the case. In the last five years, they had added five vehicles to the afternoon peak to meet schedule and to reduce headway.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Schatmeier* whether a Rapid bus could be added, *Mr. Bruzzone* replied that there were several options:

1. Rapid, which would be difficult to run on College and Broadway. The City of Berkeley has told them they would be interested in implementing a peak period towaway lane in the right lane, which would be similar to the diamond lanes used on San Francisco city streets. He believed that would make a big difference on University Avenue.
2. Limited, for which the bus would stop at a reduced number of locations, and
3. A/B stop buses, for which some buses would be designated “A” or “B”, and stops would be designated, for A buses, B buses, or both.

*Chair Knox White* inquired whether it would make sense to extend the 51 to Fruitvale. *Mr. Bruzzone* noted that the line is currently very long, and they were originally going to cut it at Berkeley Amtrak and combine it with the Shattuck bus. They also considered cutting it off at other points.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that he would like to see the ridership potential to Fruitvale examined.

*Mr. Bruzzone* noted that there was concern about the impact of the opening and closing of the bridges on operations.

No action was taken.

### **Public Comment**

There were no speakers.

### **Close public comment.**

### **Item 7A (continued)**

*Chair Knox White* noted that the Transportation Commission was limited in its comments as to the adequacy of this DEIR.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired whether the Commission would be able to comment on the transportation design and impacts of this project.

*Chair Knox White* noted that the DEIR addressed the impacts. He added that the future plan and the design of the project were not part of this item, and inquired whether the TC will be able to comment on the improvement plans once they are prepared.

*Staff Khan* noted that was not usually done, but if the Commission requested it, he would be amenable to providing that.

A discussion of the baselines and their time horizons ensued.

*Commissioner Ratto* inquired why the proposed bike connection described in the Bicycle Master Plan would not be implemented. He strongly supported the bike connection. *Staff Khan* replied that was also a major comment made by staff, and that they would like to push for it as well.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Ratto* whether any appeals had been filed by neighbors, *Staff Khan* replied that staff submitted the comments in September/October 2006, they received the administrative draft, made comments and found that those comments were not incorporated in the revised DEIR. He noted that staff is working with the consultant to resolve these concerns; they should be addressed by early June.

With respect to level of service, *Commissioner Ratto* noted that the second paragraph of TR-1 (page 3.12-16) stated, "Because the proposed project would not affect existing level of service at any of the 13 intersections in the study area, the impact to intersection level of service would be less than significant." He noted that when an intersection has an existing level of service of F, and it was slightly changed, he supposed that would be somewhat true. He believed that a 15-

minute wait, more than double the existing wait time, at an intersection was definitely a significant impact even though the starting point is LOS F; he believed that kind of analysis did not make sense.

*Chair Knox White* noted that he was very pleased with the staff comments.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that he found it difficult to believe that the intersection of South Loop Road and Harbor Bay Parkway could be LOS F. He had spoken at the City Council meeting about the peak hour traffic congestion as a result of Amelia Earhart School, which impacted intersections 9, 10, 11 and 12. He noted that those intersections were close to gridlock during peak hours, sometimes taking 15 minutes to clear.

*Commissioner Ratto* noted that he questioned the validity of all the tables, and did not know where all the numbers came from. He referred to the baseline chart, which stated that intersection #10 (Island Drive/Maitland Drive) would not be affected by the project. He found that very difficult to believe, and inquired how the drivers would get to the main island.

*Staff Khan* noted that Table 3.12-5 defined the trip distribution, and that staff would ask the applicants to include a map or sketch showing trip distribution by location instead of just a list.

*Commissioner Ratto* remarked that he was very concerned about the data, as well as the bicycle issue and not having any access to Island Drive. He cited the paragraph under TR-4 (3-12.17), which read, "The proposed project would not have a significant adverse effect on pedestrian, bicycle or transit facilities. .... However, due to the sensitive nature of this proposal, this connection has not been included in this analysis and would not be required as mitigation." He was very concerned about that language, and did not believe it was meaningful; he requested staff to address that issue as a primary concern.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted the section on transit, bicycle and pedestrian impacts read, "A project would result in a significant transit, bicycle and/or pedestrian impact if its implementation would conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs." It continued to say in TR-4 that they would knowingly conflict with the Bicycle Master Plan. He believed they were producing a significant impact by blatantly conflicting with an existing policy, and stressed that it was not consistent.

*Chair Knox White* noted that he was surprised that there was only a 30.9 second wait in the morning peak. In response to his inquiry regarding the peak hours, *Commissioner McFarland* stated that the data were collected in June 2006, which was after the school year had concluded. *Chair Knox White* believed that was a significant methodological flaw, and added that data from the school year should be included. He suggested that 9 through 12 were not correct.

*Commissioner Ratto* believed the methodology should be examined, and believed that an average of school times and nonschool times would be misleading.

*Commissioner Subramaniam* noted that 3.12-5 stated "when school was in session."

*Chair Knox White* believed the numbers were incorrect.

*Staff Khan* noted that the city had no intersection counts, and that it will be collecting that data as part of the TMP project.

*Chair Knox White* believed the motion should include all staff comments. *Commissioner Ratto* concurred with that statement.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that the report referred to long-discontinued lines 43 and 69. He added that there was also a passage on 3.12-17 that stated, "AC Transit is planning additional bus service along North Loop Road." He did not believe that was accurate, and that the report should be modified to reflect this.

*Staff Khan* noted that the reason for the staff comment was related to pedestrian access to transit, and that staff wanted connectivity to the bus stop.

With respect to the cumulative level of service in the AM peak hours of 13.8 seconds, and the cumulative plus the project was 13.7, *Commissioner Ratto* inquired how the project would decrease the delay at that intersection.

*Commissioner Ratto* noted that with respect to TR-5 regarding parking, it appeared that there would be 208 covered spaces for the units. He inquired whether there would be any garages. *Staff Khan* replied that the project would provide off-street parking, which would include garages or other parking schemes off the street. Each house would have two parking spaces, which was the genesis of the 208 number.

*Commissioner Ratto* noted that the City had requested 0.5 guest spaces per unit to be provided. He believed that adequate guest parking was very important, and that if it was not provided, guests would park in areas that could impede emergency vehicle response times. He believed that was a reprehensible recommendation.

*Chair Knox White* suggested that comment be included in its own motion.

*Chair Knox White* noted that with respect to trip distribution, he was surprised that Ron Cowan Parkway was assumed to be the key road, given that it currently is so lightly used.

*Chair Knox White* noted that 3.12-17 read, "Also, any proposed sound walls would need to be properly designed so as not to restrict visibility." He believed that discussion about sound walls should be removed, and added that the Planning Board and City Council had determined that sound walls would not be utilized. He recommended that the discussion of sound walls be removed from the document.

*Chair Knox White* discussed the project in terms of the seven EIR policies recommended by the TC and accepted by City Council. He noted that the project did not conflict with first three EIR policies (no extra lanes, no widening of intersections, and speed limits not above 25 mph). Policy 4 stated that all EIRs need to analyze bike, ped and transit. He noted that this DEIR did not do that, and it specifically stated that the effects on levels of service and the ability to use would conflict with adopted policies. He noted that there was no analysis, and that it was completely inadequate on that level. Regarding Policy 5, he noted that the only place the mitigations could get in the way is transit, but that cutting down the level of service problems at some of the intersections would benefit transit in this case.

*Chair Knox White* noted that EIR Policy 6 addressed the use of TDM to mitigate, and that there was no discussion of TDM in this proposal whatsoever. He believed that if this project were to move forward it must include, as part of the mitigation to the actual traffic it would create, some kind of ferry passes or transit accommodations. He noted that the bike/pedestrian connection between North Loop Road and Catalina was not included despite it being part of an adopted City plan. He believed the project should also be required to include a transit connection between the two streets. He believed the recommendation should include some mitigation looking at the buses between Catalina and North Loop, along with bikes and pedestrians. He noted that any road built for emergency vehicle access should be able accommodate transit as well.

*Commissioner Ratto* noted that the return trips at Intersection 5 indicated that the people using the inbound route would not be returning. He did not believe those numbers made sense, and wondered if the rest of the numbers should be questioned as well.

*Chair Knox White* believed from a transportation perspective, and in particular from a pedestrian/bike/transit perspective, this was about the worst project that could have been developed. He was concerned that if the project was built, everyone would drive because the alternative modes of transportation would not be feasible to use.

*Staff Khan* believed that number was the result of a Synchro software that analyzed the intersection LOS, and believed if they subtracted the volume for #5 instead of adding them.

*Commissioner Krueger* believed that if the project were to go forward, the only way it would make sense would be to completely reorient it so that everything was connected to Catalina. He believed they should try to integrate it into the existing neighborhood of residential homes, as well as improve the connectivity. He had serious concerns about the project design.

*Chair Knox White* called the question.

*Commissioner Krueger* believed it could be stated that the Transportation Commission had serious concerns about the project design, and requests that since it requires a General Plan Amendment to exist, that the Master Plan be brought before the Transportation Commission for full comment.

*Staff Khan* noted that the Master Plan had not been developed yet, which would be completed at that time.

*Commissioner Ratto* moved that the Transportation Commission recommend that the transportation portion of the project EIR is wholly inadequate, would drive residents to using automobiles, and did not deal with the reality of trying to encourage people to use alternate forms of transportation. The project EIR should be significantly rethought and rewritten. He added that all comments from staff report and all Transportation Commission comments from this discussion should be included, minus the parking issue. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that Bay Farm Island was never designed for public transportation, and noted that most of the housing was too far from transit. He noted that the Bay Farm Island development had many *cul de sacs* and paths. He did not disagree that this development would be contrary to Alameda's plans, but believed it seemed unfair to single out this particular project among others on Bay Farm Island.

*Staff Khan* noted that staff would create a memo that could be brought before the Planning Board stating the Transportation Commission's concerns about this document.

*Chair Knox White* stated that if the parking were to be restricted, it would not substantively increase usage of the bus line.

*Commissioner Krueger* believed the number one driver of automobile usage was the availability of parking. He believed the requirement of 2.5 spaces per unit was over and above what was required by other houses in Alameda.

*Commissioner Ratto* noted that while the business associations were trying to eliminate the parking requirement for the individual developers, because it was not up to the developers to provide parking; it was up to the City and Business Association to provide parking. He believed the needs of residential parking versus business parking were completely different.

*Commissioner Krueger* believed the addition of 2.5 spaces per unit was counter to the City's goal of reducing automobile traffic and increasing use of alternative transportation. He believed the developer should be required to not build more parking.

*Staff Khan* noted that the City's concern was to avoid impacts on City infrastructure when residents and guests may have to park on City streets that did not have parking.

*Commissioner Krueger* moved that the Transportation Commission recommend that the City drop the additional guest parking requirement because the houses already met the two parking spaces per dwelling unit requirement, as it is contrary to the General Plan's goal of de-emphasizing the automobile. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-1 (*Commissioner Ratto* opposing).

## 8. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

*Staff Khan* noted that a special meeting was held between City Council and the Transportation Commission. The City Council members requested that the Transportation Commission examine several projects related to the Bay Farm Island Bridge and the Posey and Webster Tube locations. They wished to address single occupant vehicles using these access points, and how the SOVs could be reduced. *Chair Knox White* had requested introduction of delay numbers. *Staff Khan* brought the Alameda Landing EIR that had been approved in 2006, as well as LOS and delay numbers for that study. Staff suggested working on that by using the MMC Subcommittee to chart out an action plan to bring back to a full Commission in order to tackle both projects. Staff was somewhat concerned about the impact on staff resources. Staff would also bring back the pedestrian plan implementation policies and goals being developed at this time. Completion of the TSM/TDM plan would be the next goal to complete by the end of 2007.

*Commissioner Ratto* requested a daily volume count for the Tubes, currently, and when the Base was open. *Chair Knox White* noted that *Staff Khan* had provided that information, and that it was 17% less than when the Base was open.

*Staff Khan* noted that the peak traffic hours were different for Base operations than current work travel patterns.

*Staff Bergman* noted that staff received an email from a resident, who requested that their comments be forwarded to the Transportation Commission dealing with the proposed parking restrictions on Central Avenue and Fifth. The resident expressed concern, and the email was distributed amongst the Commissioners.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.

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